

Rep. John Campbell has introduced a bill that would rescind more than \$2 million in earmarks for Berkeley in the 2008 Omnibus Appropriations bill and transfer the funds to the Marine Corps budget. The move, proposed in tandem with an identical Senate bill filed by South Carolina Republican Jim De... Rep. John Campbell has introduced a bill that would rescind more than \$2 million in earmarks for Berkeley in the 2008 Omnibus Appropriations bill and transfer the funds to the Marine Corps budget.

The move, proposed in tandem with an identical Senate bill filed by South Carolina Republican Jim DeMint, is retaliation for a vote by the Berkeley City Council last week that declared a Marine Corps Recruitment Center in the city "uninvited and unwelcome intruders."

The resolution also encouraged "all people to avoid cooperation with the Marine Corps recruiting station," and applauded those who "may volunteer to impede, passively or actively, by nonviolent means, the work of any military recruiting office located in the city of Berkeley."

"This is completely unconscionable," Campbell said. "Basically what we're saying here is, 'OK, if this is what you are going to do, don't ask taxpayers from all over the country to subsidize you!'"

Campbell said he believed Berkeley had every right to pass the bill, but was adamant the federal government also had the right to curb spending for a city passing such resolutions.

"Notice this bill doesn't say you have to let the Marine Corps in, that's Berkeley's business," he said. "What we're saying is, if you don't allow the Marines Corps in your city, then the rest of us won't foot the bill."

While Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates was unavailable for comment, his office released a statement on the matter, touting Bates' status as a retired Army captain and saying the council's vote was in no way intended to diminish the service and sacrifice of the country's Marines.

"However, this community strongly opposes the war in Iraq and the foreign policy of the current administration," he said.

"I believed from the beginning that this was an unjust, illegal and immoral war of choice. I understand that there are people across the country that may not agree with this action, but it is the Berkeley City Council's responsibility to represent the will of the people of Berkeley."

Berkeley City Councilman Gordon Wozniak, who voted against the resolution, said he thought the council had made a mistake when it cast its 6-3 vote, but resented what he called "political posturing" by the federal lawmakers.

"The council let their antiwar sympathies cloud their good judgment," he said. "Berkeley shouldn't have done this — this was stupid — but there are certainly politicians abusing this for posturing for their own political constituency."

"That being said, I didn't like our local council members posturing for our local antiwar contingency either."

Rep. Barbara Lee, who represents Berkeley, released a statement saying she planned to oppose the bill strongly.

"As for any attempt to punish the people of Berkeley by stripping much-needed federal funding, I would simply say I will strongly oppose such an effort," she said in the release.

Wozniak added the council will consider rescinding some of the more "critical" language in the initial resolution during the council's next meeting, though Campbell was hesitant to say he'd withdraw the bill should Berkeley reconsider its plans.

"Let's cross that bridge when we come to it," he said. "I don't want to engage in hypotheticals."